"The Man Who Did Things Twice"



The Black Cat

JUNE 1905

The Red Dwarf ..... J. O. Fagan.

Sabinar's Jim .. Mary Stockbridge.

A Promoter of Romance
Edith Richmond Blanchard.

The Heart of Emeline Dale
Addison Clark

The Man Who Did Things Twice
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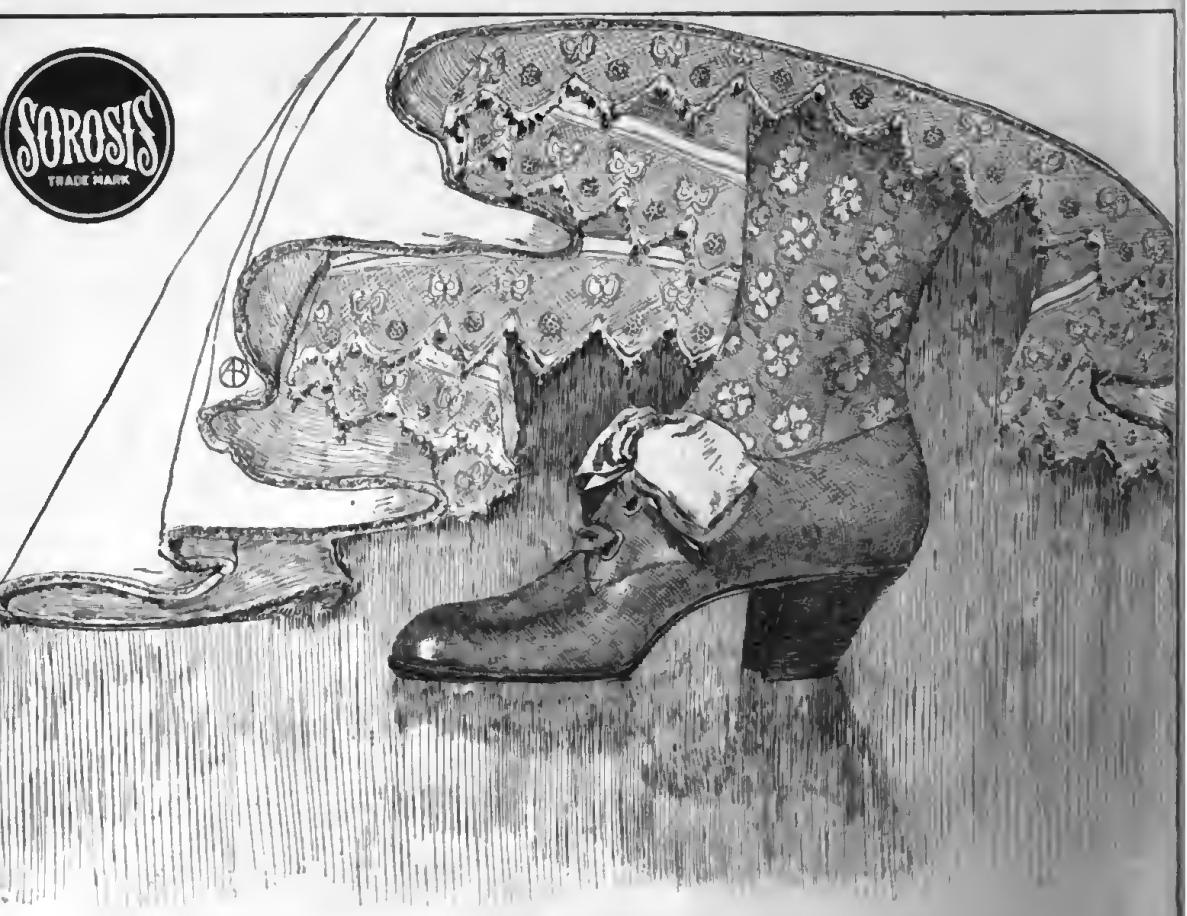
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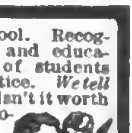
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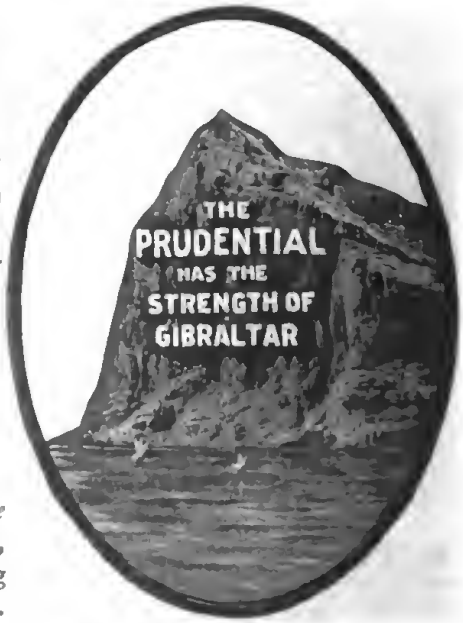
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The Red Dwarf.*

BY J. O. FAGAN.



N a sultry morning in the summer time, quite a number of years ago, long lines of Swazi Kaffirs, in full war dress, were making their way homeward up the Crocodile Valley, which is in the Leydenburg district of the Transvaal.

They were returning from a successful expedition against their hereditary enemies, the Maccatees, and were driving their booty before them.

This consisted of cattle and women. Indeed, the only male creature among the prisoners was a little red dwarf, who had been captured in one of the caves, together with the wives of the Chief whose stronghold they had been storming. The little fellow had probably been brought down country as a present from some Kaffir King in the far interior.

The dwarf was a trifle under four feet in height, but his body was thickset and muscular, and his well-shaped head betokened considerable intelligence and sagacity. A pair of soft brown eyes, very large and beautiful, bestowed upon his countenance an expression of kindliness and good-nature. The color of his skin was a brownish red, but the ochre with which he daubed himself added

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so greatly to its lustre that, in the sunshine, his complexion was almost as rosy as a ripe cranberry.

From superstitious motives, his captors had spared his life, and later, when they discovered that he was also deaf and dumb, their suspicions in regard to him were doubled, and they were afraid to touch him with their hands, although without any hesitation they frequently pricked him with their assegais and then watched, with eager curiosity, for indications of suffering upon his little manly countenance.

Finally, his tormentors contented themselves with loading upon his back a huge joint of beef, and then driving him with taunts and spear thrusts among the cattle, to pick his way as best he could over the rough and stony hills. But the dwarf was game, and staggered pluckily forward, without the slightest manifestation of fear or weakness.

In course of time the Commando arrived at the King's Kraal in Swaziland. For several months the Dwarf remained the butt and laughing stock of the nation, but he took everything as it came, with patience and good-nature. He proved to be quite skilful in dressing the wounds of the Kaffirs, and in caring for those who had fallen sick with the bush fever, and so, after a while, the tide turned, and the gigantic Swazi warriors began to tolerate, and then to admire, the little midget who could endure pain without whimpering, and every variety of abuse without manifesting a particle of resentment.

About this time, white men and Kaffirs all over the continent were being electrified by the magic word *Diamonds*. Its significance to everybody was very much the same. To the white man it meant a chance for independence and luxury, while to the Kaffir it held up a vision of marvelous blankets, tons of beads, and numerous wives.

One day a party of Swazi "boys," as they were termed, set out for the Diamond Fields, and the Dwarf was persuaded to accompany them. After a long and tedious tramp they arrived at Kimberley, where the party disbanded, each individual getting work where he could. The Dwarf was something of a curiosity, even in Kimberley, and he quickly secured employment on one of the claims. At that time and place diamond stealing was a profes-

sion, and I. D. B-ism — illicit diamond buying — was almost unrestrained. But between the miners and the I. D. Bs. there was war to the knife, and the unlucky Kaffir who was caught with a diamond in his possession was frequently given a "short shrift" or an unmerciful flogging, on the quiet.

On account of the Dwarf's cleverness he was soon promoted to a position in one of the searching rooms. Under the eye of an Overseer, it became his business to search the clothing of the natives, and to examine and tap their naked bodies for concealed diamonds. In this department there was an enormous Zulu policeman named Dingaan. The management had implicit faith in his honesty, and so Dingaan took advantage of his position to treat the natives with unealled-for severity. Even the little Dwarf attracted his officious attention, and one day he accused him of stealing a diamond.

The Dwarf was forthwith dragged into the presence of the Search Committee, where his mouth, his hair, his toes and his armpits were subjected to a rigid examination. Then an almost microscopical search was made all over his body for concealed cavities. These holes are sometimes cut out of fleshy parts, cauterized and hardened by methods known to the Kaffirs, and then filled with a mysterious composition of the right color. In these strange plugs the diamonds are secreted. The most minute scrutiny failing to reveal any diamonds on the surface of his body, the Dwarf was handed over to a doctor whose business it was to find out if any stones had been swallowed.

However, the search from beginning to end having proved fruitless, the Dwarf was about to regain his liberty, when Dingaan insisted that the sneezing test should be applied to him. Accordingly a fine, peppery compound was injected into the Dwarf's nostrils, causing a violent fit of sneezing and coughing. During the operation, the Zulu managed, by sleight of hand, to produce a small diamond, which he insisted had been coughed up by his victim. This evidence was considered sufficient, and so the Dwarf was immediately treated to an unmerciful flogging and driven off the premises.

For several weeks he remained an outcast even from the company of the Kaffirs on account of the position he had held in the

searching room. He took his punishment very much to heart and presented a very forlorn appearance, wandering around from one claim to another, begging for assistance and sympathy.

Finally, a Mr. Meyer, a diamond merchant, made some enquiries in regard to him, and the result of his investigation was a most curious and interesting revelation. One morning Mr. Meyer took the Dwarf over to the office of the mining company where he had received his punishment, and after some preliminary conversation, he requested the Overseer to display before the Dwarf a tray of diamonds. As soon as the little fellow's eyes fell upon the stones, his body quivered, and he began to sneeze violently. "You perceive," said Mr. Meyer to the Overseer, "the effect of the flogging and the sneezing compound upon the sensitive organization of the little Dwarf. Fright, you understand, plays strange freaks with people, and I am now about to show you a remarkable illustration of the fact. This abnormal delicacy of feeling in relation to diamonds is not confined to his eyesight. With the assistance of his hands as the medium of perception, the Dwarf has become endowed with a kind of divination, perhaps mind-reading, by means of which he becomes instinctively aware of the presence of diamonds, particularly when concealed in the body of a Kaffir, over which he is permitted to pass his hands.

"This curious state of affairs I have discovered by repeated experiments, and perhaps the final fact in regard to the case is the most remarkable. When the Dwarf locates a diamond, or persuades himself that he has located one, a fit of sneezing immediately follows. Very likely you now begin to perceive the commercial value of this Dwarf to a mine owner. Now, just for an illustration, I wish you would bring in a few of the natives, and let us see if I can prove my story to your satisfaction."

Accordingly, after blind-folding the Dwarf, the Overseer arranged five or six of his Kaffirs in a row. The Dwarf, standing on a chair, was drawn along the line from one Kaffir to another. He passed his long, delicately formed fingers up and down the bodies of three of them without making any sign. The fourth man in the line was the Zulu policeman. The Dwarf had no sooner placed his hands on his bare chest than he received something in the nature of a shock. Then the little fellow's shoulders began

to heave, and his muscles to contract, and sneeze after sneeze followed in rapid succession.

The Overseer, while dumfounded at this unexpected denouement, was not so easily to be convinced of the treachery of his pet policeman, and insisted upon repeating the experiment, with added precautions. The result was exactly the same.

So they concluded to search the Zulu in the usual way. This aroused his indignation, and so, more on account of his impertinence than of any proof of his guilt, they placed him in confinement. During the following night he eluded his guards, stole a horse from a nearby stable, and made good his escape. An armed posse of the Diamond Police was immediately sent in pursuit. The Kaffir fled across the Karoo in the direction of Jacobsdal.

Then followed the most remarkable man-hunt in the history of Kimberley. The police were skilful and relentless men, and before the Kaffir was able to cross the Modder river were close upon his heels. To add to the difficulties of the Zulu he was turned back from one of the drifts by a party of Boers. Then he parted with his horse, and sought refuge among some kopjes in the vicinity, first setting fire to the veldt in his rear, in order to check his pursuers. But the police were not to be baffled in this way. After a little maneuvering they succeeded in surrounding the Kaffir on one of the kopjes, and finally getting him into a trap, between their rifles and the advancing flames.

But surrender did not appear to be part of the Kaffir's plan. In a few minutes the flames, driven along by a high wind, had completely enveloped the kopje, and the police, dumfounded at this tragic turn of affairs, were compelled to retire to a position of safety, where they watched the terrible belt of fire creeping and leaping up the sides of the hill with the speed of a racehorse. Just once did they catch sight of the Zulu, hurrying upward toward the summit, through a dense undergrowth of dry reeds and bushes. Then the kopje became a roaring, crackling pyramid of flame, from which the police turned away with thoughts of pity for the unfortunate diamond thief. The following morning the remains of the Zulu were discovered in an ant-bear hole near the top of the kopje, and no less than seventeen diamonds, large and small, were raked out of the ashes and embers.

Such was the fate of Dingaan, who was probably the cleverest thief in the business at that time. When the ignorant Kaffirs in the mines heard the story they were panic-stricken. The report spread among them that the managers and mine owners had come to the conclusion that the only effectual way to separate a Kaffir from the stolen diamonds secreted in his body was by cremation, and that for the future, all natives would have to submit to the ordeal by sneezing. A good-sized riot was immediately threatened, and serious trouble was only avoided by the prompt display of the following quaint, yet comprehensive announcement:—

"Diamonds are not to be sneezed at."

However, the sneezing test was held in reserve, and in this way diamond stealing and the I. D. Bs. received a check from which it took them a long time to recover.

The fame of the Red Dwarf spread far and wide, and he quickly became, and indeed still remains, one of the most interesting individuals in the mining community. He took the name of Cecil Meyer from two of his benefactors, who evinced much interest in his education and welfare. He quickly acquired the deaf and dumb alphabet, which, added to a delightful pantomime of his own, very soon enabled him to become familiar with the ideas and manners of civilized people. At the time of the great consolidation of all the mining interests, he was given a responsible position in the native hospital which is maintained inside the mining limits.

During the siege of Kimberley by the Boers he distinguished himself by his wonderful enthusiasm and energy in hunting up and relieving cases of distress among the native population, and was one of the most popular members on the Relief Committee.

After the close of the war, at a huge jollification meeting, the little Red Dwarf was not forgotten. He was presented with a gold medal, "For Kindness and Bravery," and the demonstration that was made in his honor will not soon be forgotten by the people of Kimberley.



Sabinar's Jim.*

BY MARY STOCKBRIDGE.



HAT was his name—just Jim. Bud Winn had called him that, and, before Sabina had decided between Vere de Vere and Sir Something-or-Other, after one of the famous show-dogs, she found that plain Jim had grown to mean more than any romantic title out of the *Saturday Evening Story Paper.*

Sabina had found him on the porch one night, — a whimpering creature, with a broken leg, and an ingratiating way of licking a lone female's cheek. By morning the lust of possession had grown so strong (Sabina had never owned any living thing), she stalked determinedly over to Bud's, and, in the face of Maw Winn's prophecy that they would be eaten out of house and home and end their days at the County Farm, demanded permission to keep the dog.

As Sabina was the only woman in town able to live in the same house with Maw, Bud considered she was entitled to compensations, and Jim remained. The mystery surrounding his advent, however, was never explained. Sometimes Sabina questioned him fondly concerning his forbears, but he would merely look wise, and with the exquisite flattery of dog nature, say,

"No matter. What boots it, since I am here with you?"

Sabina was a homely woman, but to Jim she was a Venus, and her faded gray gown the glass of fashion. She never had to shrink from his soft eyes. "I reckon if a person 'd ast him, he'd 'low I was as well-favored as any woman in Central Township," she used to say to herself.

It was eleven o'clock one morning, the time when Sabina went to the store with the market-basket on her arm.

Jim trotted round to the front door and examined the threshold

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earefully. He tried the side door, and, with symptoms of disconragement, the kitchen door on the porch. Affeeting to believe that she might have gone without whistling for him, he rushed to the front steps again and followed the path to the road, his nose grazing the gravel. Finally he returned to the back porch and lay down with a groan of resignation. He dozed but fitfully, often rousing himself to listen, with head on one side and face wrinkled in perplexity. He had not seen Sabina for three days, and his sky was fallen, his world shaken to its foundations.

Maw Winn eame to the door, her white curls bobbing. She held a clean handkerehief to her delicate, ivory-tinted face. Jim knew she eould not abide a great hulking dog on the porch (he had heard her say so often enough), so he jumped up, gazing out toward the barn with a pretence of being merely *en passant*.

The old lady electrified him by calling, "You Jim, come along in here!" He could hardly believe his senses; but there she stood, actually inviting him into the house. In her impatience she made a movement toward him, whereupon he flattened his hindquarters and dashed round the eorner, only to reappear warily from behind the rain-barrel after mueh coaxing. A rencounter with Maw was as much as Jim's dignity was worth any day.

She led the way, and he followed, in an agony of deference to her, to the rag-carpet — the trumpery chairs and tables eropping up embarrassingly — to all that indoor paradise from which he was commonly debarred. Then eestasy! For it was into Sabina's presence he was ushered. Yet was that Sabina? That woman lying in bed with idle hands resting on Maw's star-pattern quilt? Of course it was, only he had never seen Sabina when she was not busy. He knew all about her work — he had grown up to the music of her brisk step about the kitchen.

Sis' Tobias came in hurriedly. Her Sunday bonnet had been thrust on her head in haste, and she also held a clean handkerchief to her face, from behind which she produced an emotional snuffle.

"I knew 't was the pneumony the minute I laid eyes on her," she whispered, in an aside audible in any part of the room. "Air you goin' to hev the Baptis' or Methodis'?"

Jim was oblivious of the two nodding old women — he was trying to tell Sabina how he had missed her. Never had he so coveted the queer twist in the human tongue. He stood by the bed, breathing one continuous sigh — which was a mannerism signifying extreme felicity — his fine eyes glowed, he wagged his tail ceaselessly, and he licked her hot fingers.

But Sabina did not utter a word. Jim felt her tears on his head, and the idea that she was suffering was so intolerable that he began going through his few clumsy tricks — shaking hands, marching, and waltzing with his tail in his mouth — with desperate eagerness, his eyes fastened hopefully on her face.

"My land!" ejaculated Sis' Tobias, as he ended with a few notes of his most melodious singing, "I reckon Jim's been in long enough. He smells reel doggy. I wouldn't be a mite surprised ef 'twouldn't make Sabinar worse."

Sabina leaned over and whispered in Jim's ear.

"Good-bye, Jim. Paw's bound to take care o' you-all. He's promised faithful. Jim. . . old Jim. . ."

She still held his head between her feverish palms, but her eyes were beseeching Sis' Tobias.

"I don't reckon I'll ever see Jim again," she said, her face working. Her eyelids drooped abashed, and she went on deprecatingly, "Why, no, Sis' Tobias, I didn't mean no harm. I know there ain't no dogs — *there*. But you see he's all I ever had — Jim. And it was kinder comfortin' for me to lie here an' study 'bout findin' him again — somewheres. He's tol'ably old, Jim is; and he's always bin an awful good dog — the most conscientious dog you ever seen. Why, he's bin a lots better dog than I hev a woman — yes, ma'am."

"Hush, Sabinar! You know he ain't got no immortal soul to save. Why, you ain't no better than a heathen yourself to carry on so!" Sis' Tobias had been speaking in a loud tone, as though Sabina were passing beyond hearing; now her voice rose in a wild chant. "Repent! Repent, while the day yet shineth, and Jordan's rollin' on!"

A fit of coughing seized Sabina, in the midst of which she gasped out, "What's that in the Good Book 'bout 'Not a sparrer falleth?'" When she was quiet, she took Jim's big head again,

and looked long into his eyes. She rubbed his blaze caressingly. "Old velvet-face!" she murmured, smiling wanly; and with that smile she lay back, as though every tie that bound her to earth was broken.

It seemed to Jim, in thinking it over, that she must have gone away very soon after that.

. . . . . .

Paw Winn, in his Sunday coat, and beaming benevolently, came shuffling out to the barn. He set down a pan of corn-bread and drippings, and, in addition, unwrapped a piece of raw meat.

"Look yere, what I brung you from the store. Give up a dime for it, blame-if-I-didn't!"

Jim munched and gulped gratefully. Presently it appeared that the old man was in grief, so the dog interrupted his feast, and came to lay his head on Paw's knee.

"Wal, poor Sabinar's gone!" said Paw, holding his bandana mournfully in one hand. With the other he absently chinked some silver in his pocket. "No idee she'd laid by so much out her wages. Won't tell Maw jes' yit; wait till ar'ter the funeral — to-morrow, or some day, mebbe." He glanced round furtively, smacked his lips, and chuckled.

Maw bustled out, holding up her skirts. "Paw! Where be you? Why, Paw!"

The old man blew his nose. "Can't help thinkin' o' pore Sabinar, an' how she nussed me when I was down," he quavered, with a suspicious note.

His wife eyed him with withering sarcasm. "I dunno as she was any *kin* to you-all, 'Lijah Winn! Considerin' Sabinar was only hired help, with no folks wuth speakin' of, Bud's doin' real well by her."

Tears flowed down Paw's rosy, cherubic face. "No woman — not the President's wife, nor Queen Victory herself — could beat Sabinar at fried cakes an' salt-raisin'. An' she brung me terbacker from the store. Bud would let his ole Paw set all day hankerin' for a chaw terbacker. She were a good gal — Sabinar."

Maw bridled. "She were terrible humly, with thet birth-mark side of her face, scarin' little chil'ren."

"What's humliness when a gal kin cook like Sabinar?"

demanded Paw, bitterly scornful of female vanity. He stood up, rather unsteadily, and with the nasal singsong sacred to the scriptures, began to declaim: "She served us faithful, fourteen-fifteen year — no hand like to hers when it come to fried cakes an' salt-raisin' — an' the Lord will make her ruler over many. Wal done thou good and faithful servant!"

"Why, Paw! How you talk! Would look full as well ef you'd come in an' set by the remains along side o' me, while the folks is comin' in. An' don't let Jim out, *whatever!* Lemme fix yore collar an' tie this minute. Paw! I smell liquor on yore breath. You've bin down to the 'Exchange'! Where'd you git the money — Bud never give you none." With surprising energy Maw took her spouse by the collar and shook him until he was a mere limp, rusty rag.

Horses and wagons drove into the yard. Jim applied one eye to a crack and saw men standing bareheaded around the front door. He heard the melodeon in the parlor giving forth a droning noise, and presently the shrill singing of a mournful hymn. After a while the people began to drive away, and with the idea that Sabina might be among them, Jim, unable to contain himself, leapt through the window. He had an exciting time smelling the paths trampled by strange feet — but of Sabina there was no trace. If she had passed over the threshold, he could not tell which way she had gone.

. . . . . .

Every day Paw escaped to the "Exchange," where he drank himself into a ribald and boastful condition, and returned to defy the wife of his bosom. Maw could only weep and scold, and wonder where he obtained the sinews of war. She bolted the outside door on him (it was summer now), and he, cackling with glee, took up his quarters in the barn with Jim.

"This here business o' changin' yore clothes twicet in the twenty-four hours air plumb foolishness, anyway. Sabinar was a master-han' for such work. Glad she's gone, blame-if-I-ain't!" he soliloquized.

Jim had never cared for any one but Sabina — she had satisfied every desire of his heart; Paw and Maw had been necessary evils, suffered to encumber the earth because in some way pertaining to

her. But now in his extremity he attached himself to the old man, following him about, and watching patiently at the door of the "Exchange." But if Paw had seemed to care for him at first, a change was soon apparent. He no longer brought store meat — or even corn-bread and drippings — he afforded him no food except for reflection upon the incomprehensible ways of the lords of creation. When Jim approached, he was met by violence, kicks, curses and beatings, until the dog, who had been so secure in the integrity of his own intentions, and the traditions of a loving mistress, found his faith in human nature sadly shaken.

"It's plumb foolishness, spendin' good money on dogs," said Paw, expectorating into the shavings. (Paw had plenty of tobacco these days, and his old shirt and vest were stained beyond recognition.) "Sabinar couldn't hev reckoned thet money'd last forever. Thet no-'count Jim might live five-ten year. What business had Sabinar to save her wages, hey? Money's the same as Bud's now, an' what's Bud's is mine, or orter be. Thet's right! Set up thar as meachin' an' reproachful as you kin! I'll larn ye! I'll be shet o' ye, ye varmint!" he added, addressing Jim.

That same morning he chained Jim under the wagon of a passing teamster.

Of that day in his life, Jim could never bear to think afterward. He was forced to travel miles in the heat and choking dust. On the edge of the city they stopped at a saloon. Jim lay panting on the ground, in the shade of a load of hay. The teamster kicked him, and he responded with a snarl. Then the man seized his black-snake, and with every curl and clinging coil of it about the dog's body, rose a bloody welt.

. . . . . .

Jim lived at the end of a clanking chain, in a noisome court. His food was tossed to him as though he were a wild beast; and sporty looking "gents," with cigars cocked in their mouths, came to stand at a safe distance, their legs far apart, and say:

"There's an ugly, vicious brute for you — ain't it?"

And Jim showed his teeth, and lunged savagely at everything that came into the yard, with the exception of a pariah of a cat, who made his bed on Jim's matted side. Jim also shared his food with his brother in misery, and on moonlight nights they relieved

their feelings in mournful duos, whilst detached objects came hurtling from adjacent casements.

It seemed as though Jim were destined to rot out his bones on the damp bricks of the court; but one night, as he jumped at a rat, his collar parted, and in an instant he was over the gate — and free!

Free, but in an unfriendly city; hunted, living precariously; skulking through alleys, eating from garbage pails, sleeping in vacant cellars. He learned the lesson of brooding hate and distrust and such learning nearly drove him mad. What awaited him? A policeman's bullet — or a horrible death under a trolley-car?

At first he was always on the eve of finding his way home. Delusive hope, a will-o'-the-wisp, led him hither and yon; but in the end he always missed the right turning. He was lost.

He wandered from one place to another, his ribs showing through his mangy hide. Sometimes he watched children at play wistfully; sometimes he snuffed at a woman's skirt, and then gazed up and down the street with a far-away look in his sad eyes, for he never forgot Sabina. He often dreamt that he heard her whistle, that he walked beside her down by the creek, or that it was afternoon, and Sabina sat under the pear-tree with her sewing, while he lay at her feet.

. . . . . .

The winter passed and spring came again. One evening, when the first warmth had got into Jim's bones, and, as it happened, he had fared unusually well, he saw a woman in a faded gray gown. He followed her. She stopped. He stood looking at her, questioningly, longingly. She smiled into his eyes, patted his head, and pulled his ears gently.

He gambolled stiffly, and picking up a stick, tossed it in his mouth, looking at her over his shoulder, coaxing her applause. She seemed to be very tired, and they sat a long while on a doorstep, side by side, Jim sturdily on guard, now and then pressing his head to her shoulder, or trying to lick the tears that oozed through her fingers.

When she rose at last, he followed her, his muzzle to the faded gray skirt. But she stopped, and after caressing his head again, said, "Good-bye, dear;" and he knew that for some inscrutable

human reason she had to deny him. He fell back and watched her until her hurrying figure was lost in the shadows, taking with it the comfort of the spring, and all his reviving joy in life. His wounds bled afresh, he was again an outcast; and someway he could not cry out, "*O God! O God!*" as she had, when they sat in the doorway.

One morning he emerged from the back-yard of an untenanted house, and stood looking about him with an uneasy sense of familiarity. A load of hay was passing, and the scent turned him sick and he saw red as he had on that terrible day. No, he was not mistaken — there was the saloon — he stood on the very spot where the teamster had cut him with the black-snake.

Then, all at once, Jim sniffed the air, and, turning his face westward, broke into a long, swinging trot. He did not stop to forage or to fight. It was hot, he panted heavily, his tongue lolled, and foam dripped from his mouth. A man yelled "Mad dog! Cop!" . . . Some boys stoned him away from a watering-trough, before he had slaked his thirst. His bad leg throbbed and ached. Still he kept on—on and on—for he was going home.

Toward evening he began to recognize well-known scenes. He limped through the village street, and paused, gazing about him like a canine Rip Van Winkle.

There was not a sign of human habitation about the cottage. Every door and shutter was closed. Jim went from the front to the back, and snuffed patiently along the paths. If he had held the hope that Sabina might have come home, he now relinquished it. He lay down by the kitchen door, his head on the threshold, and his voiceless prayer went up to the Unknown, "Now let me die here where *her* feet used to pass."

Twilight descended, and the evening notes of a cat-bird sounded from the wood down by the creek.

What was that?

A whistle, soft and clear.

Jim leapt as though he had been shot. He ran down the overgrown path. Again came the whistle, and the voice he loved calling, "Here, Jim! Here, Jim!" and with a joy which was almost anguish he saw a tall figure in a faded gray gown standing on the edge of the wood.

But as the figure floated nearer, the dog stopped, trembling, and the hair rose along his backbone.

The figure wavered, and the call, though fainter, came with a piercing sweetness. "Jim! I didn't reckon I'd ever see you again, but—*Jim!* It's all right. You ain't afraid of me." And with a note of authority, "You come here to me, Jim!" . . .

And then they were beside the creek, as of old; and his load of sorrows rolled away. Gentler "than tired eyelids upon tired eyes" lay Sabina's hand upon his head; and, with a deep sigh, Jim entered into his own.

. . . . . .

In the morning, little Johnny Winn ran to his father in the field. "Ho, Poppa, come yere. Thereth a great big ugly dog down by the crick!"

Bud left his plow in the furrow.

"Why, if it ain't Sabinar's Jim!"

He stood looking down from the bank. Then, after a moment, he said in a brisker tone, "Run up to the house an' git Poppa the spade, Johnny, that's a good boy!"



A Promoter of Romance.*

BY EDITH RICHMOND BLANCHARD.



O one would ever have imagined that Miss Hannah Holbrook was a lover of romance. The inhabitants of the little town of Meadowvale, where she lived, would have scoffed at the mere suggestion of such an idea, and Miss Hannah's own sister, Emily, though she was far too much in awe of the sister who had brought her up from babyhood to scoff at her, and far too gentle to wish to do so, even Emily would have smiled one of her sweet, wondering smiles had any one suggested that Miss Hannah might be cherishing a secret fondness for anything less prosaic than the literature of the Congregational Gleaner or the Meadowvale Courier.

A mere glance at Miss Hannah was, apparently, sufficient refutal of such a proposition. She was tall and slim and she dressed with the utmost simplicity. Her hair, slicked back into a round, little doughnut-shaped coil, did not relieve the severe aquiline cast of her features, and her small, sharp, blue eyes were not such as one would ascribe to a seer of visions.

Her neighbors called her "real set," and, indeed, a stranger would have come to this opinion from one glimpse of her little white house with its neat door-yard. The house, it is true, was the exact architectural counterpart of half a dozen other houses on the same street, for why, argued Meadowvale, should one wish variety when similarity is consistent with comfort; but Miss Hannah Holbrook's house was never overrun with vines, the blinds never hung ajar, the curtains at the windows spoke of dustless rooms within.

Something of this precise propriety was evident in Emily Holbrook also, but in her it was tempered and blended with a shy gentleness that made it less recognizable. Emily was twenty.

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She was totally unlike Miss Hannah in feature, having an oval flower face that would have reminded an artist of the madonnas of the old Italian masters. Her light hair escaped in soft, wilful curls from the heavy braids which confined it, and her eyes looked out on life with a wondering simplicity that betokened by what still waters her feet had walked. Her maiden dreams lacked the rich form and color of passionate desire; they glowed delicately with the sunrise tints of shy love-longing. She saw all the world as it wished to be seen, and no spirit of curiosity moved her to pry beyond the barrier of appearance. Could she have been permitted to look for but an instant into her sister's mind, she would have been bewildered by the fantastic vision she beheld.

For Miss Hannah Holbrook *was* a lover of romance — personal appearance, reputation, and natural surroundings notwithstanding. It is true she had not always been conscious of this proclivity. She could remember how, long ago, in the brief days of her girlhood, she had often grown impatient with the dull, quiet round of her life in Meadowvale, craving something, she knew not what, but something that would stir into a blaze the slow fires of existence.

It was not until after her mother's death, when the care of a baby sister seemed to have set a final seal to escape from the commonplace, that Miss Hannah's longing found some source of satisfaction.

It was a rainy summer afternoon and she was searching amid the depths of an old chest in the garret, when she came upon some shabby old books, bound together in a neat pile. A slip of paper was tucked into the topmost one; "My poor Lydia's books" was written in her father's stiff, straight hand. Wondering, she carried them to the light. The rain fell with soft, pattering insistence on the roof over her head, beating out a low symphony of sound in accord with the joyous throbbing in her breast.

It was in that hour that the proud pageant of romance, with its train of fair ladies and dauntless lovers, its clang of sword and spur, and its fanfare of Love's golden trumpet, had stormed the tenantless fortress of Miss Hannah's heart and taken possession forevermore.

It is true the conquering train proclaimed no tidings of its

triumph to the world outside. Natural reticence and established habit led Miss Hannah to guard her secret from possible criticism. Indeed, Emily saw no change in her sister save that the look of impatient restlessness came less frequently to her eyes, and that now and again she would spend an afternoon in the garret, which surely stood in no such frequent need of being "red up."

Of course Miss Hannah's little stock of romantic literature was soon exhausted, and though the Meadowvale Branch Library might have offered more in kind, not for worlds would Miss Hannah have given the gossipy librarian an opportunity to publish abroad that Miss Holbrook read novels.

Even had she lived at an approachable distance from a bookstore, I am doubtful if Miss Hannah would have added to her small supply by purchase. It would have been so difficult to determine from which of the several small boxes containing the family funds the money should be taken. "Table Expenses," "Emily," "Fuel," "Charity and Church"; — surely none of these could provide the necessary sum, — and the box marked "My Clothes" was so often drawn upon in emergencies that did not seem to fit the other labels that it was unsafe to deplete unnecessarily its meagre contents.

Besides, if a book prove interesting at the first reading, why not at the second and third; and having been shown the way into a new wonderland, must one never enter again save at the leading-strings of another's fancy? Many a time when Miss Hannah's mind seemed engrossed in the puffy white dough she was kneading, or the snowy wet linen steaming under her hands, her thoughts were really busy with contriving thrilling experiences for imaginary heroes and heroines.

It was on account of this smothered, but no less dominant, desire, that the quiet routine of her existence might some time jolt out of its accustomed rut, that Miss Hannah experienced a queer inward delight when Alec Dunstan, after an absence of seven years abroad, came home to Meadowvale and proceeded straightway to fall in love with Emily.

It was certainly a case of the attraction of contrasts, this love affair, for no one could have been more unlike the gentle, fair-haired Emily than this broad-shouldered foreign-looking man,

with his pleasant, careless ease of manner and his ringing laugh.

Meadowvale had never known him well. He was not one of her own sons, but a sort of foster son as it were. Since his parents' death he had made his home with his aunt, Mrs. Dunstan, — "old lady Dunstan," in town parlance, — but in his boyhood he had spent most of his time away at school, and afterward came the years at college. Thus it was but occasionally that he dropped down upon quiet little Meadowvale, rousing it to a shocked but charmed pitch of anxiety and wonder, and then leaving it to settle back into its accustomed peace. During the long stay in distant lands, breezy letters came intermittently to old lady Dunstan, letters which she read aloud to every caller, for she was immensely proud of her dashing nephew, and all Meadowvale felt a certain distinction in having one of its children (even though he were a child by adoption) a traveler in foreign parts.

So it happened that there was much astonishment in the village church on the Sunday morning after Alec Dunstan's return when, by many, apparently inattentive, but in point of fact, peering eyes, he was seen to detain his aunt at the church door and to beg an introduction to Emily Holbrook, who, as she sat in the singers' seats behind the pulpit, was late in descending the aisle.

Indeed, there was no one more surprised than the two persons most concerned. All through the sermon, as he sat at the head of his aunt's pew, gazing beyond the old minister's gray head at the sweet, flushed face under the rose-rimmed hat, Alec Dunstan was repeating softly to himself:

"To have been away so long and so far, to have escaped unscathed from so many charms, and then to feel like this — after one glance from your eyes, you little violet-eyed madonna — you — "

But the rest of his private remarks would scarcely seem coherent in print.

Emily, too, felt a strange bewildering sensation steal over her as from her high seat she first encountered the dark eyes so persistently fixed on hers. From the holy words of her song her thoughts would wander away despite herself, and the solemn words of prayer mingled in her mind with half-formed sentences of her own framing:

"He is very handsome — I wonder if he — I wonder if I — He must have met so many — I wish — Oh, I wish — "

Miss Hannah Holbrook had not been at church that morning. She had been called out the night before to watch with a sick neighbor and was just returning, tired and heavy-eyed, as Alec and Emily turned in at the gate. They were talking most demurely of the young man's travels, but with one swift, intuitive glance, Miss Hannah comprehended that in spite of his apparent enthusiasm for Alpine scenery, all the beauty of Switzerland was as nothing to the young man in comparison with the new-found loveliness beneath a broad white hat.

Miss Hannah had entertained vague premonitions that Luther Mallock, the minister's son, a quiet, colorless but eminently upright youth, would some day request permission to become her brother-in-law, and the thought of such a match, while it was undoubtedly all that could be desired, was most depressing. If Emily should encourage his mild advances, Miss Hannah's last hopes of enlivened prospects would be swept away. But Alec Dunstan, — he indeed would bring new zest to the monotonous life in the little white cottage. Even if he took Emily away, there would come new opportunities for now and again seeing a bit of the world from which Meadowvale seemed utterly shut apart.

All this Miss Hannah was thinking while Emily shyly presented the young man, and though she inwardly hailed him as a deliverer and met his eager, manly gaze with satisfaction, her voice did not betray her, nor did her stiff little manner forsake her as she greeted him.

When he begged permission to call and bring some views of the places he had been describing, she acquiesced, thanking him primly for her sister, and after he had taken leave she seemed to have quite forgotten him as she went slowly into the house, questioning Emily about the text and the merits of the day's sermon.

All through the long bright summer days that followed, Miss Hannah watched the golden web that Love was spinning at her door. She did not miss the glint of happiness which Emily's lashes strove to hide, and she knew almost as well as did Alec Dunstan the thoughts which his look betrayed though his words kept faith.

Once she nearly disclosed the fact that she shared their secret. She and Emily were together in the attic that afternoon. Every year they opened a little worn trunk under the eaves and laid fresh lavender in the soft folded things it held, things that had been their mother's. Miss Hannah sat on the floor by the trunk and handed the articles to Emily, who shook them out gently. To the elder sister, the touching of the faded garments made the blue-eyed, golden-haired mother of her childhood a living presence, but with Emily the task was a reverent service paid to the beautiful intangible spirit of motherhood.

At the very bottom of the trunk, folded in a bit of blue silk that had been a part of Lydia Holbrook's wedding gown, lay a soft, flat parcel. Miss Hannah unfolded it musingly and held the contents up to the light. It was a pair of white silk stockings, daintily wrought, with clocks of blue forget-me-nots trailing up in threads of color from the ankles.

"I want you to have these, Emily," Miss Hannah said. "You might wear them when — "

She stopped suddenly. The sight of this relic of the wedding finery of a June day long past, had suggested a future day when she should watch Emily go slowly down the stairs as a bride to meet the tall man waiting for her with uplifted eyes.

Emily, too, had sent her thoughts along the same path though unconscious of their companionship. She did not notice that her sister had left her sentence unfinished.

"They are too lovely to put on," she said, hesitatingly. "Unless, — unless, perhaps I might wear them when, — when I'm married."

Miss Hannah was still fearful lest her idea had been discovered and spoke almost sharply in consequence:

"You are too young to think of such things, Emily, altogether too young."

Emily's flush faded, and she stood very erect. Somehow the summer had brought her, with its other treasures, a new dignity that she had not previously known.

"I am twenty," she said, slowly.

Miss Hannah's heart fluttered excitedly. Emily had never before spoken in that womanly way. Had it really happened then

and was Emily about to— An embarrassed self-consciousness in view of possible tender revelations seized her.

"You are still a child, Emily, and I should not consider such a thing for an instant. Now if you'll hand me that flowered muslin."

Emily obeyed her sister in silence. She was very quiet all the rest of the day and when she put on her hat at the ringing of the church bells for the Friday-night service, she seemed scarcely to be heeding what Miss Hannah said to her.

"I shan't go to church because I have a headache and I'm going to see if going to bed early will cure it. You tell Miss Mallock I'll call to see her about the sewing circle to-morrow."

"Yes, sister," Emily replied, vaguely.

"I'll leave the side door unlatched so you can get right in when you come home."

"Yes, sister."

Miss Hannah watched the slender figure in blue until it disappeared from sight beyond the lilac bushes in the Gordons' yard.

"Well, well," she ejaculated, as she went up the creaking stair to her chamber.

Strange to say an early hour for retiring did not affect Miss Hannah as she had hoped. She was oddly restless and for a long time tossed nervously on her pillow, listening to the call of the crickets outside, and always hearing above the low evening noises Emily's reproachful voice repeating with oracular intensity,

"I am twenty."

At length the recollection of a bit of fine linen left to dry in the shed room, afforded an excuse to slip down-stairs again.

"I'll bring it in, or the night damp'll mildew it," she thought.

She went out to the shed and came slowly back again through the long narrow entry which led to the kitchen. A low window that looked out on the garden stood half open and the breath of warm, sweet air allured her to stop a moment beside it.

"How pretty the flowers look in the moonlight," she was saying softly to herself, her eyes adazzle with the white glimmer. Then suddenly she started back.

There, close at hand, under the old apple tree by the door,

Emily was standing, Emily held fast in Alec Dunstan's arms and lifting a wondrous lovely face to meet his kiss.

Miss Hannah gasped and sank back against the wall. She longed to ease her confusion in flight, but she dared not rush past the window lest the pair outside see her flying figure and believe her to have been eavesdropping. She was in a panic of fear lest she had already been observed. If only they would go away or turn round!

But the lovers were oblivious of her presence and her wishes regarding them. Their low voices came to her clearly through the night:

"We will be married soon, won't we? Say we will be married soon, Emily. I must be at my work in Norton by the middle of October; that's six weeks away. Say you will marry me then," the young man's voice pleaded.

"Oh, Alec, I couldn't, dear; sister would never let me," came the plaintive answer. "She said only to-day that I was too young to be married. I know she likes you, but she will want us to wait a while."

"But, sweetheart, why should we wait, unless you yourself want to; and you don't want to, do you, Emily?"

There was no audible response, but in a moment the man's voice went on.

"Then we won't, love. I'll ask Miss Hannah to let me have you then, and if she says 'no' why we'll just get along without her 'yes.'"

"But, Alec, how could I, how —"

"It's an old, old way, sweetheart. A ladder at your window, a chaise in the lane, a marriage at the parson's, a return home for pardon and the thing's done. But perhaps she will say 'yes' after all."

Miss Hannah could stand no more. She scud past the window and up-stairs to her room, sinking breathless upon her bed. They were actually planning an elopement if she failed to give her consent; an elopement —! just such a one as her books told about. How lilting his words rang through her mind, "A ladder at your window, a chaise in the lane." Miss Hannah's heart beat high with excitement. If she had a lover she knew she would far

rather find him by the chaise in the lane than to meet him tamely at the altar among a throng of prying neighbors. And if these two should elope, how intoxicatingly thrilling it would be for them, and for her; she would share it all. She could watch them when they did not know. It might be unreasonable to refuse their request, but how much pleasure her obdurateness would bring to all concerned.

So it happened, that when on the next day Alec Dunstan sought Miss Hannah Holbrook's approval of his suit and disclosed his plans for an early wedding-day, she cordially granted her consent to the former request, but turned a deaf ear to his other demand.

"Emily is young, and I say she must wait," was all that he could get out of her.

"She seems to have no objections to me, it's just because she thinks you are too young," he explained to Emily later, "but for that matter, you'll always be a child to her. Our only hope lies in persuading her to change her mind."

But Miss Hannah held fast to her first decision. It is true she spent a long, mysterious day in the neighboring village of Chattersworth, where Meadowvale ladies did their shopping, coming home with a great bundle of fine cotton and linen.

"We might as well start on your things, even if we have plenty of time," she told Emily, and Emily had acquiesced, though with an uncomfortably guilty feeling lying heavy on her heart. Yet she was too happy to let even this trouble her long, too unobserving to notice how marvelously had diminished the bountiful supply of material which her sister had provided. The apparently irrelevant fact that the oil in Miss Hannah's night lamp had never been in so frequent need of replenishing, likewise escaped her attention.

So the bright September days melted into the golden glory of October, month of nature's blazonry. Alec, with every argument at his command, and Emily, with all the persuasion of her gentle pleading, had besought in vain that Miss Hannah would grant their heart's desire.

"I have said Emily is too young," was her unfailing response to all entreaties.

But the time for Alec Dunstan's departure was now swiftly

approaching, and Miss Hannah found it difficult to suppress under her usual calm demeanor the excitement which possessed her. She bravely ignored Emily's nervous distraughtness, and never did plotting lovers find it so easy to lay plans for a clandestine departure.

The afternoon that Alec brought the old ladder out of the shed and, with a fine pretense of training wayward tendrils of the morning-glory vines, set it close to Emily's window, forgetting to remove it when his task was completed, — Miss Hannah beheld this apparently innocent act with an unconcern that little betrayed the feeling it masked. Before nightfall, she had found occasion to slip away unobserved to test the steadiness of the clumsy instrument of love's stratagem, moving it to a safer footing when it seemed insecure. Emily was to run no risk in her heart's adventure.

If Emily, lying wakeful through the long night that followed, had known that in the next room her sister waited, kneeling by the window in sleepless anxiety, she might have added wonder to the multitudinous feelings which surged through her mind. She loved Hannah very genuinely, and, had her elder sister disapproved of her lover, even Alec's entreaties would not have availed. But Hannah had said herself that Alec was a brother-in-law after her own heart — it was just because she did not understand that she refused their request.

When the first glimmer of dawn grew rosy in the west, she rose and dressed as silently as though listening ears could not detect every slightest sound. She little estimated, as she crept trembling down the ladder's dew-wet rounds, the anxiety which filled Miss Hannah's heart, nor could she know that loving lips breathed blessing upon her as she went away through the mist-hung orchard to meet the chaise in the lane.

When Miss Hannah Holbrook had cleared away her breakfast dishes, she did an unprecedented thing. Leaving the waiting morning work to appeal in vain, she went slowly into the cool quiet of her little parlor and, drawing an old armchair that had been her father's to the window, she sat gazing with unseeing eyes down the road, her hands resting idly in her lap. Sometimes she

smiled a queer, vague smile that gave place to an anxious, troubled expression. Once she laughed softly in the stillness; then, even as she laughed, her eyes grew shining with tears. She shook the wilful drops away impatiently, but for a moment they shut out the trailing sweep of dusty road, so she saw no approaching carriage and heard no sound of voices without until Emily, flushed and sobbing, stole in to fling herself on her knees before her sister and to bury her head in the lap which had been her childish refuge.

"Sister, dear, dear sister, you will forgive me, won't you?" she repeated over and over. "It was wrong, oh, I know it was wrong to go away without telling you, but you didn't understand, you couldn't see how hard it was to wait. We're, — that is, I'm — I'm married, sister, but if only you'll forgive me now, I'll never do it any more, never any more."

Poor Emily wailed incoherently like a child, as Miss Hannah tenderly stroked her curls. An uncomfortable, guilty feeling took possession of the older woman. Perhaps, after all, Emily would have preferred to be married in the commonplace way of all the prosaic world. How different folks are made! She spoke consolingly, all the while patting the bit of red wet cheek that showed amid the folds of her apron.

"There, there, dear, — there, there, it was too bad to drive you to it. There, there, Hannah's sorry, not angry a bit. We'll have a little party here sometime to make up for the wedding, and your clothes are pretty well along any way. I've found time to make five of everything, and, when I was at Chattersworth, I left your measurements for some things with Miss Levie. I hurried her up, she's generally so slow, and they came home when you were out yesterday. There's a blue silk gown trimmed with fringe, a nice brown alpaca with green satin pipings, and such a pretty coat to go with it. There's new bonnets to match, too. Now, stop your crying and come and see if they fit."

Emily lifted her tear-stained face to Miss Hannah's and kissed it without speaking; then she turned slowly toward the door.

"Sister, you've forgotten Alec," she said, shyly.

"Alec Dunstan, standing on the threshold, had heard his sister-

in-law's words with a growing feeling of wonder. As he came forward, Miss Hannah read the challenge in his eyes.

"Brother Alec, will you fetch Emily's trunk down from up attic?"

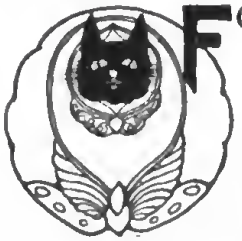
This was all she said, but, with quick intuition, he understood and read her mute appeal.

"Why, yes, sister," he answered, and, as he took her outstretched hand, Miss Hannah knew that he therewith gave her a pledge to be silent on one subject forevermore.



The Heart of Emeline Dale.*

BY ADDISON CLARK.



FORT Donald was twenty miles off the main line of the Southern Pacific road, between San Antonio and El Paso. In the days of its former glory there were fifteen hundred officers and men stationed there, and it was the most important military post in the West. It was a small world all to itself, with its quarrels and jealousies, its pleasures and romances; and all that kept it in touch with the great world of civilization was the telegraph line that stretched eastward across the prairie.

First above the rout of privates and inferior officers stood Captain Elbridge of Troop D, a dashing big fellow, dark as a Spaniard, a daring rider, a splendid shot with pistol or rifle, and a good enough soldier, though heady, and likely to go far to have his own way. Then came Major Conley, who, in the absence of the Colonel, was commanding officer of the post. He was a portly, middle-aged man, immeasurably vain of his impressive military figure, a great admirer of the women, and capable of hating intensely any one who should fall under his displeasure.

Next in order, and ranking them all, came Emeline Dale, whose commission was her influence with Colonel Howard, her uncle, strengthened by the sovereign authority which of right vests in every woman who has gray eyes, and is young and beautiful. She was not on friendly terms with Major Conley. Just what the quarrel was between them only they two could tell, but that there was something wrong was plain from the extreme politeness with which they favored each other on those occasions when they were compelled to meet. And it had been frequently remarked that the peculiar scar on the Major's ruddy face became, in the presence of Emeline Dale, a glowing purple line, and looked for

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all the world like the mark that would have been left by the angry cut of a woman's riding-whip.

Then there was Harold Raymer, a good-natured, hard-working fellow, who was only a sergeant, but his actual rank depended on his relation to the lady commander. And it was just this question that kept the gossiping tongues of Fort Donald constantly wagging. There was no question as to what Raymer thought — it was Emeline about whom no one could guess. She was not one to wear her heart on her sleeve, and not even the boldest was indiscreet enough to question her. So her secret remained her own, safely hidden behind the veil of her inscrutable gray eyes.

Emeline had a brother, Richard Dale, a devil-may-care youngster of eighteen years, whose greatest ambition was to be in the army, and whose ideal of the army's greatness was embodied in the superb personality of Captain Elbridge. And for some reason Elbridge took the boy up, and encouraged him in his reckless escapades. Perhaps he hoped thus to make a way for himself into the favor of Dick's sister. For, whatever other questions might remain unanswered, one was easy enough — Captain Dory Elbridge was making assault on the heart of Emeline Dale with all the ardor that he would have found in leading a charge into the lines of the enemy. Whether his efforts were availing anything, he could not determine, but of one thing he became sure — if he hoped to win, he must look out for Sergeant Raymer.

On a Sunday morning in early summer occurred an affair that set the whole post by the ears. If appearances could be trusted, Raymer had shot and killed Darcy, Captain Elbridge's first lieutenant. There were whispers of an all-night game in Darcy's room, with the necessary liquid accompaniments; hot words had passed over the cards, and a meeting had followed on the prairie behind the barracks. It was possible that Captain Elbridge and young Dick Dale knew something of it; who could say? The officer of the guard had rushed out in time to hear feet scampering away in the dim light, and to find Raymer bending over the prostrate form of Darcy with a pistol in his hand.

Major Conley took the matter up with a zeal that suggested a personal interest. There was indeed enough of damaging evi-

dence against Raymer, and when the court-martial convened it became evident that he had not the ghost of a chance. The queer thing about it, and what made it so much the worse for him, was that he would say nothing in his own defence. And he was not a man to submit meekly like that without good reason; it looked much as if he were trying to shield some one else. He admitted that he had passed part of the night in Darcy's room, and that there had been a quarrel over the cards; but beyond that he closed up like an oyster. Whether other persons had been in the game or had witnessed the shooting no one could say. So of course poor Raymer got the worst. The officers were all against him; and though the fellows of his company blasphemed violently in the privacy of their own quarters, they could do nothing. Sentence was passed and in due time confirmed by the Department Commander, and Sergeant Raymer's days were numbered.

Those who had imagined that Emeline Dale cared something for Raymer thought themselves now completely undeceived. She attended the trial, and manifested some interest, in her cool, impenetrable way; but she showed no sign of favoring the accused man, and her interest might have been merely indifferent curiosity. She appeared to give little attention to Raymer, but rather to study the faces of the officers of the court, particularly of Major Conley and Captain Elbridge, as if she were concerned to know what they thought about it. And when the trial was ended she seemed to abandon the unfortunate sergeant entirely, and bestowed all her favor on Captain Elbridge, and what with this sudden improvement in his prospects, and the liquor he drank, and something which was weighing heavily on his mind, the feelings of Elbridge were kept wrought up to fever heat.

Two days before the Friday set for Raymer's execution Emeline rode up to the home of Major Conley, and, dismounting, gave her bridle to a Mexican lad who stood at the gate. She stopped for a few minutes to watch some small boys playing marbles in the street, and then, opening the gate, went inside. Major Conley came to meet her with great politeness.

"Major," said she, in a voice that was mildly coaxing, "I want to be admitted to see the prisoner, Sergeant Raymer."

The commanding officer looked at her keenly, trying to read the motive beneath her innocent manner. Then he flushed, and his eyes became hard.

"Why, Miss Dale," said he, "it is impossible. I regret it very much, but I can admit no one to see him."

"I think, Major Conley," said Emeline, smiling deliberately, "that you may make an exception this time." Her voice was mildly persuasive, but her eyes had the compelling look of one who commands. The Major's face reddened to the roots of his hair, then turned pale, except a single scarlet line across his cheek. It was upon this sinister mark that Emeline kept her eyes fixed as she repeated slowly:

"I think, Major Conley, that you will let *me* see the prisoner."

"As you please, madam," he answered, bowing profoundly, "though it is a little irregular. I will send an order to have you admitted."

"Thank you, sir, thank you very much. You are so kind!"

She remained for an hour in conversation with Raymer, to the great mystification of several men who drew near at a whisper of what was going on. Had she a scheme on foot to do something for the prisoner? They thought it quite likely; one could never safely wager on the purposes of Emeline Dale. Surely, if she were only saying good-bye to a man who had been her friend, she took a long time about it. They could hear her voice and his, alternating in low, earnest tones, as if they were discussing some serious matter, and when at length she came out, she looked for all the world like a woman who had set herself a great task to perform.

From her interview with Raymer she made her way to the telegraph office.

"Hello, John, how is the line this morning?" she asked familiarly of Henderson, the operator.

"Good enough, Miss Emeline," answered he. "What can I do for you?"

"There is something you can do for me, John. Where is Colonel Howard to-day? Do you know?"

Henderson looked at her in surprise. He could not say just where the Colonel was — east somewhere, he thought, New Orleans or St. Louis, maybe. Why should she ask him?

She fixed her eyes upon him quietly, "Find him for me, won't you please?"

"Why sure, ma'am, I'll do what I can," answered Henderson. "If he's anywhere I can reach him, I ought to find him easy enough."

"Do your best and hurry about it. And if you do find him, anywhere in the United States, night or day, come at once and let me know — will you?" Henderson stared at her in amazement, but said only that he would do as she asked. "Do all you can," she repeated, "it may mean the life of a man."

The two remaining days passed quickly. Henderson kept the line humming, but could not locate Colonel Howard definitely. St. Louis said he had been there, but was gone, somewhere south they thought. Then Memphis reported him passing through to New Orleans. New Orleans knew nothing, but would keep an ear open and wire the moment they heard anything. So the matter stood when the last night came.

In the meantime Emeline acted not at all like a woman with a load upon her mind. She saw more of Captain Elbridge than ever, and so gracious was her manner that the poor captain was near mad with passion, and would, no doubt, have come speedily to an avowal, had she not skilfully avoided such a catastrophe. Much of the time she was in the saddle careering across the prairie on Brown Belle, the fastest mount in the country; and Elbridge was after her always, keeping as near to her as he could.

In the intervals of this madcap courtship Emeline had another interview with Raymer, and one with her scapegrace brother. Under the inquisitorial scrutiny of his sister's eyes Dick broke down and told the whole story of the killing of Darcy.

The hours of the last day were ticked off and still Emeline could get no word to Colonel Howard. An observer less infatuated than Captain Elbridge would have discovered under her assumption of gayety a growing perturbation of mind, the suggestion of a terrible fear; and he might have read in her eyes something not at all like love, but akin rather to hatred and loathing. But superficially she was more than ever kind.

After nightfall on Thursday she went a last time to the telegraph office. "Anything yet, John?" she inquired anxiously.

"Not yet, Miss Emeline," responded Henderson. I've just been trying to get New Orleans — wait, here they are now."

The receiver began to click off its message. Henderson took a blank to write. Emeline leaned over his shoulder watching for each word as it came. "Colonel — Howard — gone — west — on — Limited — try — San Antonio."

For an hour the line was kept hot, but to no purpose. Henderson could get no answer to his calls. So Emeline went home, fearful, and nervous with excitement, and lay down without undressing. In the gray dusk of morning she was aroused by a knock at the door, and going out, found Henderson.

"It's just come, Miss Emeline," said he. "Colonel Howard is on the 'Flyer,' coming home, I guess, or going on to El Paso."

She took the telegram and read it. "When did that train leave San Antonio, John?" she asked.

"Yesterday noon."

"And is due at Mulloon when?"

"Why, half past seven, I think, when it is on time."

"And it is now —"

"Ten to six exactly," said he, looking at his watch.

"You don't think you could get a message to him anywhere?" she asked.

"Why, I don't see how, Miss Emeline," said he. "You see there are no stops at those little stations down the road, and the operators are all asleep."

"Does the Limited stop at Mulloon?"

"Not usually; sometimes it waters there."

She stood for a time in thought, making a calculation. "Twenty miles and less than two hours to make it in," she said. "But it must be done; there is no other way." She turned back into the house, and in a minute reappeared with her hat. "Help me saddle up, John," she said. "I must get yonder to Mulloon and stop that train. Harold Raymer's life depends on it."

In less than five minutes Brown Belle was at the gate, alert and eager for a morning race.

"Go back to the office, John, and don't leave it for anything till you hear from me," cried Emeline to Henderson, as he helped

her into the saddle. Then touching the mare lightly in the flank, she was off at a gallop south toward the Mulloon road.

Captain Elbridge had passed a heavy night. For weeks he had been carrying a load on his mind that made him restless and uneasy ; and as each day brought nearer the end of things for poor Raymer, the Captain's nervousness increased. To this was added the excitement of his precarious love for Emeline Dale. Lately her extravagant moods had frightened him. He thought there might be something under her pretension of friendliness ; possibly she knew his secret. The thought of it turned him sick with fear.

He was scarcely asleep the whole night, and with the first streak of dawn was outdoors. He thought that a ride in the early morning air might bring him to himself. So, going to the stable, he saddled and led out his horse. As he was mounting he heard a clatter of hoofs in the direction of the village. Looking that way, he saw, with a thrill of surprise, a familiar figure riding down the Mulloon road. The blood leaped within him. To the fierce zest of love was added the fever of the race. She was tempting him to a trial of speed. He would run her down on the prairie and there compel her to listen to the words of love he had so long wanted to speak. It was time to be done with trifling — she should not escape him this time. He put spurs to his horse, and was away after the flying girl.

The road from Donald to Mulloon is for half the way broken by hills, dashing now up, now down, now round the base of them. After ten miles of this it comes out upon the open prairie, and for the rest of the way is level as a race track, save for an occasional creek or gully.

Emeline had not gone far before she heard some one coming behind her. She easily surmised who it was. Her first sensation was one of fear, but this gave place quickly to a sort of desperate humor. She could easily have run away from him, but it pleased her better to let him come on ; she might use him in accomplishing her daring purpose. She allowed him to approach within a few yards of her, then called back with a smile that made him dizzy :

" We're out early this morning, Captain Elbridge. I'm going to meet the 'Flyer' at Mulloon. Where are you riding so desperately ? "

"I am only following you," he cried with eager voice, "as I must always do."

He did his best to ride up with her, but she easily kept her lead, and smiled and laughed back at him bewilderingly. She had herself under perfect control, and her hand on the rein timed the mare's speed to keep just two lengths ahead. As she came out of the hills into the open, she settled herself more firmly in the saddle and looked away westward for the first sign of smoke rising above the hills. Her hair fluttered in the stiff morning wind, and her cheeks were pink with excitement. Captain Elbridge kept his eyes fastened on her in fascination, and drove his spurs deep into his horse — but he could not gain an inch. Brown Belle was going splendidly, taking her stride with ease and without a sign of fatigue.

On either side of them the prairie stretched away in an immense, unvarying expanse of green, till it blended with the blue of distant mountains. Southward was an unbroken prairie, far as the eye could see. Three miles out of Mulloon the road turned sharply to the west, cutting in toward the railroad at an angle of forty-five degrees, to intersect it a hundred yards above the water tank. At this point Emeline first caught sight of the train creeping along like a dark worm across the prairie, and leaving a black trail of smoke behind it. Soon it whistled for the bridge four miles out, and she knew that the race was to be finished desperately.

She pulled on her rein a moment and allowed Elbridge to come up. He, too, had seen the train, and guessed her intention. He would have turned to leave her, but dared not.

"Emeline! Emeline!" he called to her passionately. "Why do you always run away from me like this?"

"Captain Elbridge," she said, leaning toward him and paying no heed to his question, "I'm going to beat that train into Mulloon. It is for the life and honor of a man — a better man than you will ever be. Follow me as closely as you can, and as you value your honor, don't dare desert me now."

He would have said something in reply, but before he could find wŏrds she laid her hand gently on the neck of Brown Belle, and the little animal sprang forward with all her strength. Elbridge dropped behind, dazed, frightened, overwhelmed, fearing to go on, yet fearing more to turn back.

The train came on, seeming to grow larger as it drew near. Emeline with terrible excitement leaned down and talked to the mare encouragingly —

"Faster! faster, Belle! Do your best, lady! We must beat the train! we must! it's for *him!*"

And the plucky animal raced as she had never raced in her life before. Emeline kept her eyes on the train. It looked large and terrible now, like a monster breathing fire and smoke. The rapid whirling of the wheels made her dizzy.

Then the exhilaration of the race got into her blood. She forgot the man behind her — forgot everything but that she must beat the train. She sat erect with her eyes on the goal. She must not only keep up with the flying train — she must get ahead of it and stop it. Now the first houses of the village flashed by. A dog ran out and barked at her viciously. The water tank loomed ahead of her. The people on the train caught sight of her, and crowded the windows to watch the race. The engine whistled encouragement. On the rear platform a gray-haired man in soldier's uniform, with a pair of field glasses to his eyes, watched the flying girl.

Only a few hundred yards were left. The mare was blowing now fearfully. Emeline leaned down again and spoke to her earnestly:

"Faster, lady! faster! We're gaining! Now your best, your very best!"

For some reason the train slowed a trifle as it approached the station, but with no purpose of stopping. She was gaining! Now she was ahead! A thrill of triumph made her dizzy so she could hardly keep her seat. A few seconds more and the tank flashed by. Now she was upon the track. The mare almost fell with the suddenness of the stopping, Emeline tumbled off somehow, and stood leaning breathlessly against the side of the panting horse, as the train thundered toward her.

The engineer, leaning from his cab, saw what she had done. There was a loud shriek, a mighty sliding of wheels, and the great Sunset Limited came to a stand, puffing and hissing, not twenty steps from where the girl stood. Then, as if its sudden stopping had been premeditated, it backed down to the tank and began to take water.

Realizing that her task was not yet done, Emeline put forth her strength for another effort. She took the mare's rein and led her past the long line of cars to the Pullman in the rear. People were at the windows, protruding their heads to see what had happened, and many of them jumped down to watch the girl. As she came to the last car a stately military gentleman came forward to greet her.

"Why, Emeline, Emeline Dale!" said Colonel Howard. "Was it you giving us that splendid race?"

She was almost fainting with weariness and the long strain of excitement, but with a great effort she kept her head and faced coolly the many eyes that were turned upon her.

"Yes, Uncle Nolan," said she, "I've had a hard ride. Sergeant Raymer is to be shot this morning at nine o'clock for killing Lieutenant Darcy. He is entirely innocent." Colonel Howard looked at her with quick understanding, but said nothing. "Lieutenant Darcy killed himself by accident, and Harold Raymer is as innocent as you or I. Perhaps"—she turned to Elbridge who had by this time ridden up and dismounted—"perhaps Captain Elbridge will confirm my statement."

The unhappy captain at that moment felt the world tumbling in upon him. The many eyes that were fixed upon him seemed to probe his heart and lay bare the shame hidden there.

And worst of all were the cool, insistent eyes of the woman whom he had risked everything to win, and whom he knew now that he had lost utterly. He had measured his strength with hers—now he must throw himself on her mercy.

"Miss Dale is quite right," said he. "Darcy shot himself—Raymer had nothing to do with it."

Colonel Howard took out his watch and studied it for a moment, then raised his eyes to Emeline. "Nine o'clock, you say? Then we haven't any time to lose. It is past eight now."

In the little Mulloon station Colonel Howard penned a telegram, read it over, and put his pen to the paper to sign it, but stopped and looked at Emeline with a smile.

"Perhaps you would like to sign it first," he said.

She looked at him in surprise, and then, catching his meaning, flushed with pleasure and triumph, took the pen and signed her name boldly to the saving words:

"Morgan F. Conley, commanding: You will delay execution of Sergeant Harold Raymer until further orders."

"Send this through without a minute's delay," said Colonel Howard, affixing his own signature and handing the message to the operator. "Drop everything till you get it through. It means the life of a man, and maybe" — he looked at the glowing cheeks and shining eyes of Emeline Dale — "and maybe more."

It all came out later how Darcy was killed. They were playing cards — Captain Elbridge, Darcy, and young Dick Dale — and the boy and Darcy quarrelled. They had both been drinking and hardly knew what they said. Raymer had been there, trying to look out for the boy, but had gone away when he found that his company was not wanted. From hot words they passed to blows, and finally to a settlement with pistols outside. But before the word could be given, Darcy, in his excitement, discharged his pistol, killing himself. Raymer had been on the lookout for Dick, and when he heard the shot ran out in time to see Darcy lying on the ground and the boy running away as fast as he could. Naturally he thought that Dick had shot Darcy, and from that moment his lips were sealed. Captain Elbridge had known everything, but for reasons of his own remained silent.

And after all that she had done for the sake of one man, no one could say certainly what lay deep in the heart of Emeline Dale. Some said that she only wanted to see justice done an innocent man. Others thought she was taking revenge on Major Conley. But others — and they were the majority — looking at the confident bearing of Sergeant Raymer, his hopeful face, and eyes looking not backward but steadily to the future, would say:

"If he carry in his breast a heart made heavy with despairing love, then he bears his burden well."



The Man Who Did Things Twice.*

BY DON MARK LEMON.



OF commanding figure and soldierly bearing, with deep-set gray eyes, hollow, cadaverous cheeks, and moustache and hair an intense blue black, his singular personality alone had anywhere and at all times attracted special attention to the man; but coupled with this distinguished personeity, and singling him out as remarkable in the highest degree, was the fact that he lived in duplicate.

Thus — if on Monday he arose early, breakfasted on coffee, toast, and eggs, afterwards retired to his rooms to occupy himself until noon at his desk; then, after partaking of lunch, quit his rooms to ramble about the city, giving alms to the old blind organwoman, going up and down particular streets and through particular quarters, thence back to his hotel, to his dinner, to his desk after dinner, and finally to bed — on Tuesday he would go through precisely the same régime; arising early, breakfasting on coffee, toast, and eggs; afterwards retiring to his desk, thence to lunch, to his rambles up and down those particular streets and through those particular quarters that he had visited on Monday, giving alms to the old blind organwoman; thence back to his hotel, to dinner, to his desk and papers; finally to bed.

On Wednesday he perhaps would spend the day quite differently, arising late, going out on horseback for the entire day, attending the theatre at night, and to bed at midnight or later; but howsoever he spent Wednesday, Thursday — or the day following — was sure to be a repetition down to the smallest detail.

Friday would see commenced a new series of action for Saturday to duplicate.

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* The writer of this story received a cash prize of $100 in THE BLACK CAT story contest ending October 12, 1904.

He was the echo — as it were — of himself, and a consummate echo at that, for time and time again he had been watched to see whether he would not make some mistake or fail in his series of duplication, but whenever it was possible for an act to be duplicated he never had been known to fail in its duplication; and, indeed, he had grown so shrewd in the matter that he never did on one day what could not reasonably be duplicated upon the next — if that succeeding day was to be a duplication of the preceding one, and not the beginning of a new series of action.

That this man should deliberately go about living as if his soul were a stereoscope, and life, to be appreciated, must be like the stereoscopic picture, double, was generally considered an astonishing thing; and, besides, it seemed such a reprehensible waste of energy, time, and money.

To fall from his horse upon a Wednesday at a particular crossing, bruising his body and spraining his wrist, was bad enough; but to repeat the accident at that particular crossing upon the following day was a pure waste of energy. To lose a half-hour on Friday by coming down to the depot too early was perhaps an error of calculation; but to repeat the action on the following Saturday was a waste of time. To visit his tailor on Monday and order a new suit of clothing was nothing reprehensible; but to drop in on the following day at precisely the same minute and order a similar suit of clothing could be nothing less than a waste of money.

It was this trait of duplicating all his expenditures that had first attracted attention to the man's singular character. And, indeed, one who coolly and voluntarily paid all his bills twice over was certain, sooner or later, to have minute notice taken of himself and his comings and goings.

Not only was Henry Hobart's character remarkable, but it had an element of danger as well. Any enemy could have committed a series of duplicate crimes or misdemeanors about the city of Weston and The Man Who Did Things Twice would have come under instant suspicion as the guilty party. But evidently Henry Hobart was without enemies; one might add, without friends. His was the best known face, but he the least known man, in the cultured little city of Weston. Not that his character was such

as to repel the advance of friendship, but simply that he drew around perhaps a gentle and kindly nature, an almost impenetrable cloak of reserve.

It may have been that the man's mind was divided, one half acting normally and consistently, whilst the other half drove him each alternate day to imitate his conduct of the preceding day, as a little impish boy imitates the actions of one going before him in the street. Or perhaps he was merely eccentric. But there seemed something more than eccentricity in his conduct when, upon a certain Saturday, he deliberately returned and allowed a vicious dog to bite him in the manner that it had bit him some twenty-four hours before. Such conduct could arise from nothing less than methodical madness.

Living his own life in his own reserved way, cultured and studious, troubling no one, offending none; doubly liberal in his expenditures and never pressed for means, steadfast in his chosen eccentricity—if such it were—and in his face and manner no questioning doubt of himself, perhaps in time Henry Hobart had been accepted like any other man, the curious had ceased to be curious, and his mysterious character, without any further or deeper scrutiny, had become one of the mysteries of human life, had not the man been suddenly struck down as by an invisible hand and the appalling mystery of his death heightened tenfold the mystery of his life.

On a Tuesday morning, at fifteen minutes of ten o'clock, an attendant was summoned by the call-bell to room Sixty-Three of the Sumner House, and upon obeying the call found Henry Hobart struggling in the throes of a strange and unnatural death.

The Man Who Did Things Twice, half-dressed, standing in the centre of his outer room, was battling with the invisible air about him for breath, or, as the attendant put it later, "Like he was fightin' with something that weren't there."

The hotel was aroused, Doctor Thiel was hastily summoned from his office on the next floor, and everything was done that science could suggest or despair persuade, yet in less than ten minutes Henry Hobart lay dead on the floor, within his stilled brain hidden the profound mystery of his life, and still echoing in the death

room his one strangled cry ere death sealed his blue lips — *To-morrow!*

It was a strange case, a questionable case, a frightful case, but beyond all it proved a baffling case, for the police came, removed the body to the morgue, intimating death by poison or other foul play, and examined the rooms and overhauled the possessions of the dead man, but who the deceased was, who his kindred or what his former residence, or the cause of his death, they could not discover. The scholarly tomes that filled his shelves bore no signatures or bookmarks, and private papers of any kind there were none. The autopsy made the same day — afternoon — upon the body of the deceased failed to discover any poison, and Doctor Thiel's belief that the man had been strangled seemed without support, as no foreign substance or growth of any kind was found in the windpipe or air passages.

Nevertheless, Doctor Thiel was firm and blunt: "The man was strangled," he maintained. "Make the best of that, gentlemen, and then go to your dinners."

One thing only seemed certain, one thing only was undisputed, — The Man Who Did Things Twice, with severed windpipe and autopsy-marred body, would not duplicate his own death upon the morrow. He had come to his death on a Tuesday, a Tuesday with which — had he lived — he would have begun a new course of action to be duplicated on Wednesday. But he had died, and now for once The Man Who Did Things Twice would fail in his eccentricity. Perhaps for that his spirit would be troubled.

Next morning, while the attendant who had been first on the death scene of the previous day was holding forth at length on the tragedy with certain servant-cronies, the call-bell suddenly rang and the hand of the call dial spun around and pointed to number Sixty-Three.

The man hastened to obey the summons, not noticing that the hands of the hall clock pointed to fifteen minutes of ten, nor delaying to recollect what guest occupied room Sixty-Three. The tragedy of the preceding day had been the event of his life, and he had not as yet descended to the trifles of his daily routine.

As he tapped briskly at the door of room Sixty-Three and put his hand upon the knob to enter, it suddenly came over him that

he had done precisely such a thing before. That at about that time of some other morning he had been summoned by the call-bell to room Sixty-Three — had knocked, turned the knob, entered — and —— a loud cry, a shout thick with horror, broke from the man's lips, and he reeled back into the hallway.

There before him, in the centre of the fateful room, half-dressed, battling with the invisible air, with blue lips and protruding eyes, stood The Man Who Did Things Twice.

The ominous, ghostly hush that followed the frightened attendant's cry was quickly broken by the hurry of many feet, and soon again the hotel was aroused and again Doctor Thiel bent over the prostrate and dying Henry Hobart.

Outside and distantly could be heard the clang of the fire-bells, but in the room of death all was sudden silence, all were hushed by the frightful, ghostly thought that the scene before them had been enacted before — the dying man with his discolored face and struggling hands, the physician bending over him, the alarmed, pitying faces of the gathered guests, and the frightened servants huddled in the background. *And the man must die — die as he had died!*

They looked on, and waited. Then the end came, and Doctor Thiel, arising, said, "He is dead!" He had uttered those words once before and under like conditions. And the guests and the servants spoke together in horrified whispers, as they had done before; then the assembly broke up and the hallway was cleared, as before!

There was something immeasurably painful about it all, to live a thing over in that frightful way, to be, as it were, mere puppets at a show, and one day to be to another day as a reflection in a mirror.

For a time those who had witnessed both tragedies seemed to live in a kind of trance, and moved about and whispered together like beings in a dream; but finally the natural reasserted itself, and then curiosity seized them.

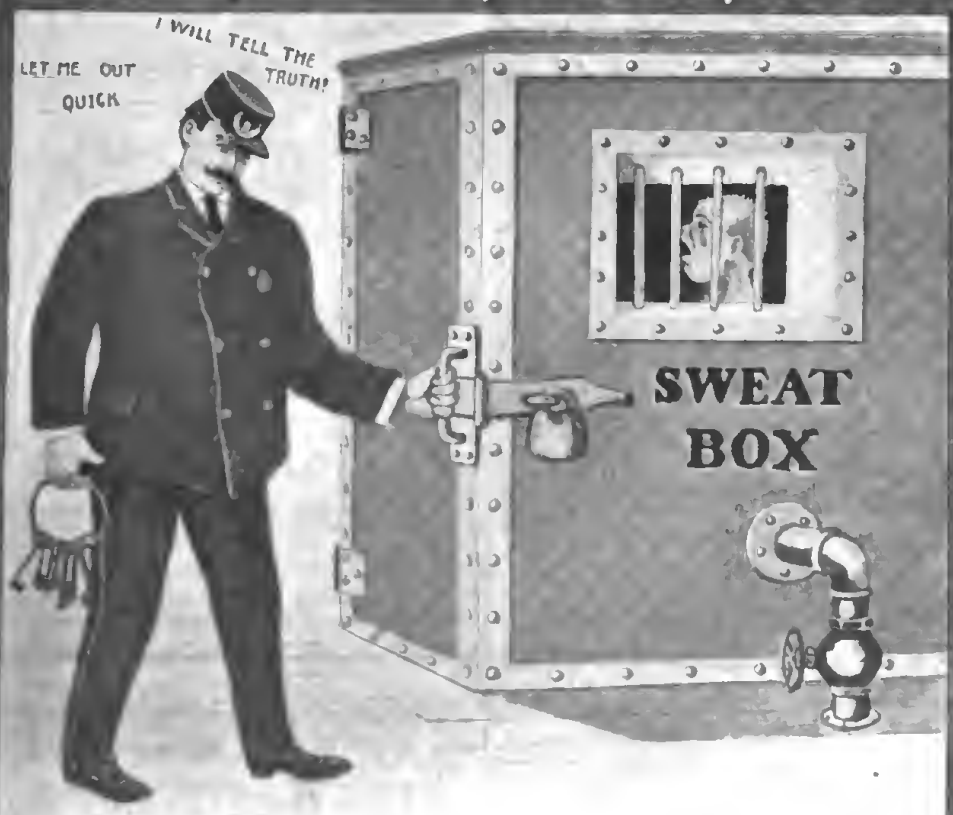
What was the meaning of it? Henry Hobart had died and his body had been mutilated by the surgeon's knife. How, then, had he died a second time and his body shown no marks of the knife? Had they been deceived by a ghost? No: there in room Sixty-

Three lay the dead man — flesh and blood — and seven blocks away, resting on a marble slab, with the water dripping continually on it, lay the other body of Henry Hobart — The Man Who Did Things Twice.

A sudden doubt came into the mind of Doctor Thiel, a misgiving that frightened him. Was that other body — that autopsy-marred body — still resting quietly on its slab at the morgue? Or —

Hastily quitting the hotel, he hurried towards the morgue, and suddenly came up against an insurmountable blank wall of mystery. The morgue was a heap of charred ruin and smoldering, steaming ashes, and *if* the autopsy-marred body of Henry Hobart had been lying on its slab during the period of the fire, then it had been totally consumed, and that other body up at the hotel was that of a second Henry Hobart; but, if the autopsy-marred body of Henry Hobart had *not* been lying quietly on its slab during the raging of the fire, then, in God's name, who and what was he who had died up at the Sumner House that morning?





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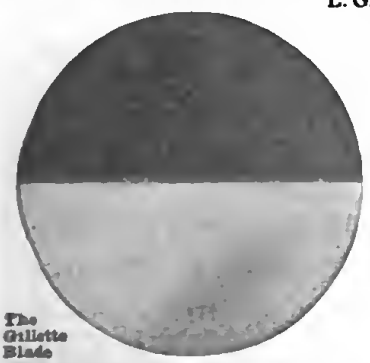
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Painter-Tobey-Jones Co., April 16, 1905.
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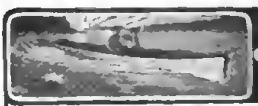
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